

THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

ORIGIN, GROWTH AND HISTORY OF ORGANIZATION.

The Germ of the Society That Finally Spread Over the Continent—The Principles of the Order—The National Encampments, the Commanders-in-Chief and the Membership of the Remarkable Society.

From the Philadelphia Ledger. The idea of organizing every element of the army which had united to save the union into one grand organization, with the officers and men on equal footing, all governed by the same rules and regulations, is credited to Chaplain W. J. Rutledge, of the Fourteenth Illinois infantry. The honor of its practical development belongs to Major B. E. Stephenson, of the same regiment. Stephenson and Rutledge were soldier "partners"—that is, tent mates and cronies in the war. It was during the Meridian expedition, under Sherman, at the beginning of 1864, that the conception of cementing the friendship of the officers and men of the war was over by organizing a grand society occurred to the mind of Chaplain Rutledge. It was natural that the idea should be discussed with his bosom companion, Major Stephenson. Both were soon convinced of its feasibility, and both were earnestly in favor of setting the project on foot as soon as the favorable moment arrived.

After the war was over and the final parting came, Stephenson and Rutledge, residents of different quarters of Illinois and somewhat remote from each other, never losing sight of their idea, corresponded together on the subject. Meanwhile Dr. Stephenson had already opened up the question and submitted rough notes of a proposed ritual for such an organization to several interested persons in Springfield, Ill., where the late Chaplain Rutledge met him in the month of March, 1866. It was during this conference between the two, and others who had been consulted and become interested, that the germ of the Grand Army of the Republic as we see it today sprang into consistent form. This preliminary work at Springfield was participated in by hardly more than a dozen men. Besides the original projectors, Rutledge and Stephenson, they were aided by Colonel Martin Flood, Daniel Grass, Edward Prince, John M. Snyder, Majors R. M. Woods and Robert Allen, Captains John S. Phelps, B. F. Smith, Dr. James Hamilton and two or three others.

POST NO. 1.

The ritual for the organization was the work of Major Stephenson and Captain Phelps. The latter had risen from the ranks in the Thirty-second Illinois infantry. Some secrecy was preserved, and the printing of the ritual was placed in the hands of Phelps, who took it to another town—to the office of the Deatury (H. T. Deatury, whose proprietors and all their employees were ex-soldiers. While detained at Deatury attending to this duty Captain Phelps began proselyting for the new society, and succeeded in arousing among the old soldiers a great enthusiasm for the scheme. So successful was Phelps that the Springfield people were outstripped in the good work, and the Deatury veterans organized the first post of the Grand Army of the Republic, which was mustered in on April 6, 1866, by Dr. Stephenson, who was accompanied to Deatury by a number of interested Springfield friends to take part in the ceremonies. It was called Post No. 1, and was, in fact, the birth of the Grand Army of the Republic. The promoters of the project had gone through the form of organizing the "Department of Illinois" of the Grand Army, though in fact it had no membership except the baker's dozen of local soldiers engaged in the preliminary steps of the movement. The Deatury post was the first formal, actual step.

PRINCIPLES OF THE ORDER.

First. The preservation of these kind and fraternal feelings, which have been found together with the strong cords of love and affection the comrades in arms of many battles, sieges and marches.

Second. To make these ties available in works and deeds of kindness, of favor and material aid to those in need of assistance.

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Sunday-School Lesson for September 10.

Encouraging the Builders.

HAG 11: 1-9.

BY J. E. GILBERT, D. D., LL. D.,

Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

THE WRITER.—The Jews returned from captivity by authority of Cyrus, in 538 B. C. led by Zerubbabel, as governor, and Joshua, as high priest, (Ezra, ii: 2). In last lesson we learned of the attempt to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, begun two years later, and of the opposition of the Assyro-Babylonians, hindered and discouraged them. As a result the temple lay in ruins for many years. Work was forbidden by Artaxerxes (Ezra, iv: 21-23). In the year 520 two prophets appeared, Zechariah and Haggai. The former was a revivalist, seeking to awaken the religious zeal of the people. His ministry continued about two years. His contemporary was greatly concerned for the house of God, anxious that it should be restored and that Divine worship should be again established there. Haggai flourished only a few months, all in the second year of Darius, who had become favorable to the Jews (Ezra, vi: 1). In four different discourses, which form the book before us, he exhorted his people to build the temple. Our lesson is his second discourse.

THE WORD (Verses 1 and 2).—Haggai declares that the word of the Lord came to him. This is the usual form by which the prophets announced their communications (Zeph. i: 1). Sometimes this approach of God was called a burden (Nahum, i: 1), and at other times a vision (Isa. i: 1). The message which Haggai delivered substantially the same thing, that the prophet is charged with a message from the Almighty. It is impossible for us fully to explain how these communications became convinced that they were the appointed bearers of heavenly tidings, but there seems to be no doubt on the subject in the minds of the contemporaries. In this instance Haggai was directed to speak to the governor, to the high priest, and to the rest of the body of the people. His commission was so broad as to elevate him for the time being into unusual importance, making him the mouth-piece of God to all the returned exiles. The high station to those of the humblest class. What he was charged to say is recorded in the seven verses following.

THE HOUSE (verse 3).—The first part of the message called the people to contemplate the condition of the temple. Some words were spoken at the beginning in building the walls. These were standing bare and neglected, but they indicated the size and character of the structure, as well as the general plan when completed. The old men, those who had been in Jerusalem, prior to its overthrow (Ezra, iii: 12), and had seen the temple in its glory, were especially urged to consider the present temple. Of course the contrast between the two would be very great. A beautiful edifice erected by the hands of the fathers (I Chron. xii: 35), was in the memory of these venerable men who saw now only ruins. The effect of the comparison is easily understood. The latter house seemed mean and worthless. Good would come out of such reflection.

THE PRESENCE (verse 4).—The speaker

lect—New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Michigan, Tennessee and Louisiana. The Philadelphia Encampment of thirty-one years ago proved the organization, then less than two years old, to be already national in its ramifications. This Encampment abolished the district organization, and the Union was taken root in any considerable extent, thus bringing the posts into direct connection with the State departments. It was after a heated discussion that the resolution declaring the organization would not make nominations for office, was adopted. The first adopted, General John A. Logan, was elected commander-in-chief at this Encampment. It was Logan's order of May 5, 1868, designating May 30 as a day of "strewn with flowers or other wise decorating the graves of comrades who died in service of the Union," which gave origin to what is known officially as "Decoration Day."

THE SOCIETY OF SUDDEN DEATH

(Concluded from Page 10.)

I am willing to second your proposition.

Max was about to make some remonstrance, but he felt his foot pressed under the table and, looking around, saw the eyes of Etienne Duval fixed on his with a warning expression in them.

The vote was, therefore, unanimously agreed to, and the president, taking a few cards from a drawer, again addressed the meeting. "My friends," said he, "I hold in my hand six cards, the number of the members present. Five of these are marked with plain figures 1 to 5, the other is blank and is the passport of freedom to the lucky holder. The duty of all is to propose that Etienne Duval, our junior member, shall draw one card. Each member shall draw one and place it face downward upon the table without looking at it, and upon a given signal each shall reverse his card and show whether he has been fortunate enough to win the desired boon or is still compelled to drag on a miserable existence upon this earth."

"Agreed" shouted all. "Hurrah for the game of death!" Etienne Duval took the cards, shuffled them for a few seconds, and then, with a meaning glance at the president, offered him the little packet and in accordance with the arrangements placed it face downward upon the table. The others followed his example, and Max felt a cold shiver convulse his frame as his fingers touched the pasteboard which might prove his sentence of death.

"Now," cried Duval, in a loud voice, "turn up the cards and see what fate has in store for each." As he spoke he reversed his card and showed the figure 5 upon it, the others did the same, and it was with a feeling of intense relief that Max saw that his bore the number 1. Before, however, he had time to congratulate himself, a fierce oath from Etienne Duval called attention to the president, who was sitting gazing at his card, which was the fatal blank. "Treachery!" he gasped, turning fiercely upon Duval. "Dog, this is your doing!" "What of this as quickly as you can," whispered the Frenchman, in the ear of Max. "Morbleu, do you not understand me?" he added, as the latter hesitated; "the police will be here directly." Max took the hint and slipped away unperceived as the tumult in the club-

room of the Society of Sudden Death grew louder and yet more loud. "Treachery!" exclaimed Hermann; "what do you mean, Rudolph? You have drawn the chance we all so eagerly desired, and now you complain. Have you turned coward?" "Nos habemus, nos habemus, Nos habemus tumulus," sung Franz, who had been drinking heavily ever since the meeting opened. White with rage, Rudolph darted round the table and grasped the Frenchman by the throat. "You have sold me, you villain," cried he, "but I will have your life." Doubtless he could have executed his

THE PROMISE (verse 5).—The presence of God with His people is always a source of joy and strength. So the Hebrew children, pointed to by the spokesman (Dan, iii: 25). David desired nothing more than to know that God was near (Psalm, xxxviii: 2). It was this that sustained the apostle as he went forth to preach the gospel (Matt., xxviii: 20). But in this case God reminded the returned Jews that His presence was according to promise (Ezra, iii: 14), was with these, and that account leaders, and people were bidden to be strong and to work.

THE PURPOSE (verse 6 and 7).—Why this faithfulness of God to His promise? Why does He hold to His company of the people in human actions, but only a few thousands? (Ezra, ii: 64). What end has He in view? The purpose is made known by the prophet. He intends through these restored exiles to bring to the desire of all nations. Without question that was the Messiah, the Shiloh whom Jacob fore-saw in the line of Judah (Gen. xlviii: 15). Indeed, the covenant with Abraham had respect to this Wonderful Person (Gen. xvii: 5), and the edicts issued by the king of Persia, that Moses were intended to educate a people to receive Him and prepare the world for His advent. The Lord declares that He will only rule the earth, and that the convulsions which shall occur in the earth, political and religious, are all preparatory and necessary to hasten His advent and His benign reign over the hearts of men.

THE TRUTHS.—Men do well to remember that God has a purpose in the affairs of this world. He suffers the largest liberty in human actions, but at times He thrusts in His own power to direct the course of events after the counsel of His own will. Moreover, He has a plan, conceived in infinite wisdom and executed by almighty power. Nothing of all His doing is hap-hazard, all is systematic and orderly, designed to reach the end which He fore-saw in the beginning. That end centers in Christ. The centuries prior to Him all went forward to His advent. The centuries since His time are passing rapidly forward to His universal reign. There have been dark days when men could not see what God was doing, but afterward all has been made plain. The duty of all is to build with brave hearts and strong hands these structures in which shall be displayed the glory of the Christ. All may be co-workers in some sphere, some in another, to hasten His advent and His benign reign over the hearts of men.

THE TREASURES (verse 8).—These words must have been full of comfort to those who heard them. The purpose for which the Israelitish nation was established should be realized. God's word is pledged to this. His own spiritual promises guarantee it. And yet these people are poor and weak. They are little with which to conduct any great enterprise, and they are still subject to a heathen king, who may change his policy and course, as his predecessors did. After all it is not easy for the faith of man to rest upon God alone. It is natural for all to look for earthly means with which to accomplish great results. This may have been the case with these poor disappointed and unfortunate Jews. A God informed them that the treasure which they were to possess was not hidden in building temples, in establishing governments, in successfully conducting any worldly business, the gold and the silver were His. No matter if His people did not then possess it—no matter if they regarded themselves as poor—yet at the proper time this precious metal would be obtained.

THE GLORY (verse 9).—Now comes the closing statement of the prophet's discourse, which he had ever tried and been prepared by what preceded. The house then in process of construction should be more glorious than the former house. Does this mean that the temple of Zerubbabel should exceed in splendor and comeliness that of Solomon? That is hardly probable. Zerubbabel's temple was probably at twenty millions of dollars, and the entire building was probably the most expensive as it was the most beautiful the world had ever seen. It was a proper representation of the wealth and grandeur of the empire in its golden period. It must be that the reference is to the fact that Zerubbabel's temple, which was really the same temple in the time of Jesus, only repaired and embellished by Herod (Mat., ii: 13). The sense will be that the temple of the ninth verse is made to follow the seventh. The glory of the house is through the glory of Messiah.

THE POLICE.—The police had long had their eye upon Rudolph, and the discovery of the false will among his papers gave additional weight to the gravity of the charge against him, which resulted in his being sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Eel-like, M. Duval slipped through the meshes of the law, being accepted as principal evidence against Von Vogelshimer, and received the reward promised by the general. It did not do him much good, however, for it all went into the creditor's hands at different tables where he tried his infallible system. And he is now as destitute as he was when he became a member of the Society of Sudden Death.

Before the summer had passed away Max was united to Etienne's daughter, having previous to the nuptials given her the most solemn assurance that he would join no club or society into which his brisk little American wife had not made the fullest inquiries.—Chicago Record.

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